

Warbler (Mr. A. J. Campbell), and the nesting of the White-rumped Swift (Mr. Cochrane). There is also a report on "Bird-ringing," besides the interesting shorter notes always to be found in the pages of our contemporary. Most of the papers have excellent photographic plates.

We have left to the last a paper running through all three parts, and entitled "Material for a Study of the Megapodiidae," by the well-known Osteologist Dr. Shufeldt. An article from his pen is always worthy of close study; while in this case the wonderful nature of the Megapodes gives special interest to such a full and careful account of them, illustrated both by black and coloured plates.

XXIX —*Letters, Extracts, and Notes.*

The Nest of a Mesopotamian Plover.

DEAR SIR,—The accompanying photograph (Plate XVII.) of a nest and eggs of *Chettusia leucura* (White-tailed Plover or Lapwing) was taken by my son, Capt. W. Edgar Evans, R.A.M.C., near Amara, Mesopotamia, on 29 May, 1918. Many pairs of *C. leucura* were breeding in the neighbourhood of Amara that year, but their nests were by no means easy to find, the natural wariness of the birds, the open character of the country, and the almost tropical heat of the sun combining to defeat his attempts. Regarding the two nests he found and photographed, my son has supplied the following information:—

"The first nest I succeeded in finding was in an irrigated but uncultivated piece of land near the Tigris, two to three miles above Amara. The ground was in parts fairly wet; while the drier portions were much encrusted with white 'salt,' and sparsely covered with suedas and grasses. Here four pairs of White-tailed Lapwings were nesting in 1918. They were extremely demonstrative on my approach, yelping, after the manner of Redshanks, as they flew around or perched on some small eminence. On 17 May, a direct search for the nests having first failed, I returned to the

field by creeping along an irrigation ditch and lay-up behind a small fig-tree. The birds were now quiet, and apparently my return had been unobserved. Presently one of the females came into view on my right, and after many spasmodic little runs disappeared behind some tufts of grass and there remained. Feeling sure she must be on the nest, I hastily jumped up, and running towards the spot saw her fly off (she had no time to run as she had without doubt previously done on my approach), but even then I did not at once see the nest, so well did the eggs harmonize with their surroundings. The nest was merely a scrape in the comparatively bare drier ground, with a few dead rough, brown straws in it, chiefly at one side. The eggs were four in number, and not more than four to five days' incubated.

"The second nest, shown on the accompanying plate, was found on 29 May on a dry ridge among the marshes some twelve miles below Amara, and about a mile from the left bank of the Tigris. On the rushy margin of the adjoining marsh many noisy *Chettusias* were flying around, but a search for the nests there came to nothing, and the subsequent finding of the nest on the ridge was purely accidental. It was close to a small straggling leafless *Lycium* bush, and contained four practically fresh eggs. The extent to which this Plover is gregarious in the breeding-season may be gathered from the fact that I have counted as many as twenty-one around me at one time. Considerable numbers of Kentish Plovers (*Ægialitis alexandrina*) were also breeding on the ridges among these marshes. Two nests found by me contained three incubated eggs each."

The eggs of *Chettusia leucura* from the above-mentioned nests agree, on the whole, with the figures given by Dresser in 'The Ibis' for 1902 (Pl. VI. figs. 1 & 2), the ground-colour, however, being of a decidedly greyer tint.

Yours truly,

WILLIAM EVANS.

38 Morningside Park,
Edinburgh.

16 February, 1920.

Birds of Texel.

DEAR SIR,—It was with some consternation that I saw in Mr. Ticehurst's "Contribution to the Ornithology of the Island of Texel" (*Ibis*, April 1920) reference made to a list of the birds of that island that I compiled thirty years ago, in the first year of my stay on Texel. Since then I have been able to rectify it considerably, and I find that the statements regarding the Great Grey Shrike, Goshawk, Wigeon, and Great Black-backed Gull should be withdrawn, as I had been misinformed by the local men of that time.

The latest list of birds breeding on the Wadden Islands is to be found in 'Ardea,' the Journal of the Nederlandsche Ornithologische Vereeniging, November 1908, a translation of Leege's latest list, commented on by Messrs. Daalder, van Pelt Lechner, and myself. Even to that list some additions have to be made, especially for the Texel.

The Common Gull is now a constant, though rare, breeder. The Black-headed Gull has increased considerably in a big breeding colony in Waalenburg, on the property of the "Vereeniging tot Behoud van Natuurmonumenten." In the same locality a colony of Sandwich Terns is flourishing and steadily increasing. The Arctic Tern undoubtedly breeds in great numbers on Texel and also on all the other islands. Montagu's Harrier is a much more common breeder than the Marsh Harrier. The Kestrel has repeatedly been found nesting on the ground. A Kingfisher bred in 1902 near the water-mill in "Het Noorden," and the Swift nests in the larger villages. Both the Tawny Pipit and the Grasshopper-Warbler are fairly common breeders in the dunes, and the Nightingale had a nest in 1913, 1914, and 1915, but has disappeared.

Yours truly,

JAC. P. THIJSSÉ.

Binnenduin,
Bloemendaal,
2 May, 1920.
